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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Erdogan: Turkey Will Not Forget US Support - Milliyet
TGS: Halki Seminary Should Not Be Reopened - Hurriyet
General Myers: Insurgent Attacks on Rise in Iraq - Sabah
Washington Post: Bush Support Decreases to 47 Percent -
Sabah
Putin the First Russian Leader to Visit Israel - Hurriyet
Thousands of Israelis Rally Against Withdrawal Plan - Aksam
Turkey to Build 7 Schools in Afghanistan - Hurriyet

OPINION MAKERS

Erdogan: Ties With US a Main Pillar of Turkish Foreign
Policy - Radikal
Laura Kennedy to Visit Cyprus - Radikal
15,000 Armenian Tourists Visited Turkey Last Year - Zaman
Iraqi Parliament Suffers First Casualty - Radikal
Woman Lawmaker Killed in Iraq - Cumhuriyet
Council of Europe Denounces US Over Guantanamo Abuse - Yeni
Safak
Lebanese Celebrate Syrian Pullout - Radikal
Putin on First Visit to Israel, Palestine - Cumhuriyet
Israel Worried About Russian Missiles in Syria - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Erdogan Underlines Significance of Ties With US; Addressing
Turkey's ruling AK Party group at the parliament on
Wednesday, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan said that Turkey
should not forget the long-standing backing given by the
United States in several areas -- from the struggle against
terrorism to energy cooperation. Ties with the US
constitute a 'main pillar' of Turkey's foreign policy,
Erdogan said. "Despite disagreements over ways to handle
certain problems, the need for common understanding and
cooperation continues," he stressed. The PM identified
Cyprus, PKK terrorism, and Armenian genocide claims as key
issues between the US and Turkey. "Cumhuriyet" regards
Erdogan's remarks as an effort to secure more US support in
dealing with growing pressure for concessions on Cyprus,
the PKK and the Armenian issue. While praising the United
States, Erdogan slammed the European Union, charging that
the EU has not kept promises on breaking the isolation of
the Turkish Cypriots.

US-Turkey to Launch Technical Talks After Presidential
Approval of Incirlik Decree: Technical negotiations between
Turkish and US officials regarding the use of Incirlik
Airbase as a logistical cargo hub for US operations in Iraq
and Afghanistan will begin following the approval of a
related cabinet decree by President Sezer, "Milliyet"
reports. The talks will clarify the number of planes
arriving at Incirlik, the equipment to be carried by US
military cargo planes, flight durations, number of
logistical personnel for the flights, flight corridors, and
inspection of cargo material by the Turks. "Cumhuriyet"
reports that the technical discussions are already underway,
and that the US side has received verbal assurances that a
positive response to the cargo hub request will be given
soon.

Turkish Military Advises Against Reopening of Halki
Seminary: The Turkish General Staff (TGS) has prepared a
document recommending changes to the national security
document drafted by the National Security Council (NSC),
papers report. The TGS document highlights fundamentalist
and separatist activities as 'internal security threats'
facing the country. The document advises Turkey not to sign
international accords that legitimize separatist activities,
and indicates that economic imbalances between different

regions in the country should be resolved. The document also warns against the spread of 'Pontic-Greek propaganda, and recommends that the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul not be allowed to 'upgrade' its status. The report also advises that Ankara reject requests for the reopening of Halki Seminary.

DAS Kennedy to Visit Cyprus: Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Laura Kennedy will travel to Ankara, Athens, Nicosia, Brussels and London from May 1, Turkey's official Anatolian Agency reports. State Department Spokesman Adam Ereli said that Kennedy's visit to Cyprus is an extension of current US efforts aimed at reaching a solution on the divided island within the framework of the Annan Plan.

Turkey Protests Polish, Russian Votes on Armenian 'Genocide': The Turkish Parliament protested on Wednesday a decision by the Polish assembly to recognize the mass killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks during World War I as a 'genocide.' To express its displeasure, Ankara canceled some meetings between Turkish and Polish lawmakers that had been scheduled for May. Russia's State Duma also reiterated its support for the Armenian claims. The Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) said it would send a note of protest to Russia over its position on the 'genocide' issue. Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan repeated his call on Wednesday to Armenia to open up its archives and allow historians from the two to establish historical facts. Erdogan reacted cautiously to a proposal from Armenian President Robert Kocharyan that the two countries first work to establish diplomatic relations. 'Before we move on to improve ties, there is are historic issues that need to be resolved,' Erdogan said. Meanwhile, the conservative-intellectual "Zaman" reports that Foreign Minister Gul said Turkey will receive this year some 40,000 ethnic Armenian tourists from the United States thanks to a joint tourism initiative launched with Armenian priests in the US three years ago. A recent poll conducted by Turks showed that 73 percent of Armenians want to spend holidays in Turkey, "Zaman" notes.

Turkey to Build Schools, Hospitals in Afghanistan: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan told his AKP group Wednesday that Turkey will build seven schools and a hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan. Erdogan described the situation in Afghanistan as 'heart-wrenching,' saying that in Kabul there is nothing left that seems 'like a city.' He said that Turkey's aid efforts in Afghanistan will be carried out by the Turkish International Development Agency (TIKA).

Dervis, New Head of UNDP, Will Work to Reduce Poverty: Turkey's former economy minister Kemal Dervis, the newly appointed head of the UN Development Program (UNDP), faces the tough task of halving by 2015 the number of people who live with extreme hunger, "Sabah" reports. The report notes that the UNDP has allotted 8 million USD for projects to reduce poverty in eastern and southeastern Turkey. Foreign Ministry Spokesman Namik Tan congratulated Dervis on his election to the UN post.

EDITORIAL OPINION:
Putin to Israel; Incirlik Airbase/US-Turkish Military Cooperation

"Putin in Israel"
Fikret Ertan observed in the Islamist-intellectual "Zaman" (4/28): "Putin's visit to Israel will be overshadowed by the deal on SA-18 anti-aircraft missiles. Despite US and Israeli pressure, Russia has not backed off its plan to sell 20 SA-18 missiles to Syria. In other words, the military balance between Israel and Syria will be altered to Syria's benefit to a certain degree. . Yet the visit of the Russian leader Israel will be a breakthrough in bilateral ties. Whether this will be a positive development, however, remains to be seen. Ignoring the US and Israel and deciding to sell missiles to Syria is a decision that stems from Moscow's power. Russia is sure of its strong position on this matter, and is certain that eventually Israel will need cooperation with Moscow."

"The Return of Russia to the Middle East"
Akif Emre wrote in the Islamist-opinion maker "Yeni Safak" (4/28): "Recent developments might be interpreted as the return of Russia to the Middle East, but we need to look at this situation with the utmost caution. First of all, Russia does not have a good record on the question of Israel's expansionist policy in the region. Even during Soviet times, Moscow was supportive of Israel and protected Israel, along with the US. Moreover, as the US pledged full military, diplomatic, and economic support for Israel, the Soviet Union produced the human resources, sending hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews to settle in Palestine. . During Putin's visit to Israel, the Iran issue will be higher on the agenda than Israeli-Palestinian relations. Israel is worried about Russian-Iranian cooperation to develop Iran's nuclear capacity. Giving Moscow's close strategic

cooperation with Iran and Syria, Russia is beginning to emerge as both a key regional players and a balancing factor."

"What Will Happen in Incirlik?"

Zafer Atay opined in the economic-political "Dunya" (4/28): "While Turkish officials remain silent on the Incirlik issue, the US Embassy website is carrying explanatory statements about the US request. Some unidentified officials in Washington are also making remarks on the issue. According to some reports, the US has got what it wanted. Incirlik will be used as a logistics hub. The meaning of this is not very clear. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said that the rules of permission given to the US for the use of the base have not changed. According to Gul, 'there is nothing new on the issue. We have only updated the prevailing practice.' I would like to know the details of this 'updating'. There are some claims that neither arms nor troops will be transferred through Incirlik. That is fine. But some others are saying that 'no lethal weapons will be allowed.' Can someone tell me which weapons are not lethal? It was said right from the beginning that Incirlik would be used only for cargo planes. Right after that, rumors spread that Washington would use Incirlik for operations in Iran and Syria. According to US sources, this information is false. Cargo flights would be limited to Iraq and Afghanistan, and they would carry only humanitarian assistance. These rights at Incirlik will be valid for the UK as well, as the UK is an important part of the coalition. . Reportedly, the Americans were hurt by the fact that the issue took so long to be resolved. They were also angry that the issue was linked with US Congressional action on the so-called Armenian Genocide issue. They were also upset that the announcement of the agreement came just before April 24. How sensitive the Americans are! . Apparently, some unidentified officials said that Incirlik is not very important for the US, and that the US has other alternatives. Former Deputy Defense Secretary Richard Perle had already expressed such a view. He said that the Incirlik issue was kept on the agenda as a symbol of the friendship and closeness of the two countries. I don't know about you all, but I am seriously confused. If there are no changes on the issue, and if everything is the same as before, then let Turkish officials inform the Turkish public -- not an American internet site. Maybe then we will understand the issue better, and we will feel more comfortable."

EDELMAN